

Chelmsford Recycling Committee Minutes

February 7, 2019

Town Offices, Room 200, 7:00 pm

Members Attending: Mark Gallagher, Rebecca Gore, Cynthia Fiekers, Nick Parlee, Aaron Cunningham, Jocelyn Demuth, Karen Willis

Members Absent: Kevin Goscila

Visitors: Annette DeBisz, Mary McCauley, Keller Williams Realty, Representative from High School Eco Club

Business

Minutes

The December meeting minutes were approved, with revision.

Schools

A representative of the high school Eco Club was presented to discuss ongoing initiatives, including the Town-wide Clean-up. A local Boy Scout troop is interested in participating.

Cynthia suggested the possibility of quantifying the number of plastic bags that litter Chelmsford's streets and byways. It may be useful for volunteers to take photographs of trash and plastic bags to report to the community. Cynthia also noted a phone application – she will get more information - that can be used to track trash locations which may be useful for the event.

Jocelyn suggested that the Eco Club may want to create some informational videos on how Chelmsford's trash is collected and disposed. Nick noted that the Science Channel had created video footage of trash collection in Chelmsford already.

The annual Volunteer Fair is scheduled for March 2nd at the Senior Center. This is a good event to recruit volunteers for the Town-wide Clean-up. The Recycling Committee could provide a table for the Eco Club to recruit volunteers.

Jocelyn suggested that the Committee create a Google Docs location where ideas for goals and event planning could be stored and edited. She will create a link to send to members. The committee also discussed issues related to the Open Meeting Law. The site could be used for informational purposes as long as no official business is discussed.

Coordinator's report

Nick noted a January recycling rate of 25%, with 261 tons of recycling and 839 tons of trash. There continue to be wait issues at the Covanta facility. Republic Services has added additional trucks on Monday and Friday, when the worst bottlenecks have occurred.

Nick is close to completing the state recycling incentive grant application, which is due next Friday. He believes that the town could receive up to \$10,000 in grant funds. The town currently has about \$12,000 in grants available for recycling programs.

The Committee discussed issues in developing a recycling drop-off and swap shop, including site selection and types of materials that could be accommodated at a site. It was suggested that the Committee develop goals and a vision for the site at a future meeting.

The town manager has approved two leaf drop-off collections for the fall.

Julie Greene is the new state regional recycling coordinator. She is based in Bedford. Nick suggested that the committee may want to invite her to an upcoming meeting to discuss solid waste and recycling issues.

The next Energy Conservation Committee meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday at 6:30 pm. Aaron is likely to attend.

Publicity

Karen reviewed the recycling leaflet for the tax collection notices. Committee members discussed possible revisions.

Representatives from Keller Williams attended the meeting to discuss ways they could assist with town recycling issues. Several possibilities were discussed, including sponsorship of reusable bags, school contests, sponsorship of an environmental scholarship for high school students, sponsorship of recycling awards, a recycling calendar promotion, and assistance with other recycling events. Committee members also noted that realtor's involvement in the community would be valuable source of information on residents' concerns and education regarding recycling issues.

The committee discussed other publicity items including a magnet promotion. Jocelyn suggested that the Eco Club may want to design the magnet. Nick will check to see if such a promotion would be eligible for state recycling grant funds.

The committee discussed the possibility of more education events for the public, including a library event to discuss the current state of recycling in the town and what residents can do to increase recycling.

The committee also discussed developing a list of long-term goals and priorities. These included identifying resident's objections to the plastic bag ban and developing a suitable update to the warrant article.

Next meeting will be held on March 7th.